Event Vetting

Government employees, particularly high-level officials like United States Attorneys, are subject to ethical restrictions governing the types of events they may attend. Some restrictions relate to benefits, including luncheons, dinners, awards, and tokens of appreciation they may accept. Other restrictions relate, among other things, to participation in events that are sponsored by persons who do business with or lobby the Government; that have a fundraising component; where it may appear that official attendance is being used to promote the event or the sponsor; or where elected officials may be in attendance. To assist us in vetting compliance with government ethical restrictions, we would appreciate it if you could provide the following information. If you do not have specific information for each response, please provide such general or descriptive information as you currently have. Please do not hesitate to call the Office's Government Ethics Advisor, (b)(6), (b)(7)(b)(6), (b)(7)c , at (b)(6), (b)(7)c or e-mail him at (b)(6), (b)(7)c to discuss this.

1. Name, date and time, and location of event.

Common Cause/NY Annual Awards Dinner, April 12, 2016, 6-9 pm, University Club, 1 West 54th St., New York, NY

2. Format of event (*e.g.*, cocktails; presentations; speeches; and/or meal).

Cocktails, dinner, MC'd award presentations with accompanying speeches

3. Estimated cost per attendee of event.

We estimate our costs at $200/attendee

4. Are any attendees being charged to attend the event?

Yes, this is a fund-raising event.

   a. If so, who (in general) is being offered free attendance, and who is expected to pay?

Common Cause staff and interns attend at no cost, certain honorees (such as the US Attorney and his guest) and our Master of Ceremonies are offered free attendance.

5. Name of entity extending the invitation and link to web site (if any). Common Cause/New York, www.commoncause.org/ny

   a. Does the entity extending the invitation engage in lobbying? Yes, Common Cause/NY is a registered lobbyist and a lobbying client with both New York City and New York State.

6. Sponsor of event if different from above. N/A.
   a. Does the sponsor of the event engage in lobbying?

7. Names of additional entities that will be recognized for sponsorship or support of the event.

There are no other organizational sponsors.

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8. How many persons are expected to attend? 200-250.

9. Demographics of expected attendees (*e.g.*, lawyers; law enforcement; business leaders; students; etc.) Civically-minded New Yorkers

10. Are any elected officials expected to attend and, if so, what is their expected role? State and City elected officials are invited to attend the cocktail portion of the event, but have no expected role and are not identified or recognized at the event.

11. Is there a fundraising component to the event? (*e.g.*, program advertisements; dinner ticket price; silent auction)? If so, please describe.[1] Yes, this is a fund-raising event with a fund-raising committee, dinner tickets sold and program advertisements.

12. Expected role of U.S. Attorney (*e.g.*, simple attendance; remarks; speech) Attendance and acceptance speech of no more than 5-10 minutes.

13. If the U.S. Attorney is being honored:

    a. What are the criteria your organization applies to determine who should be honored for this specific award? We seek to recognize the achievements of outstanding New Yorkers who share Common Cause's support of honest, open, accountable government and have worked to strengthen our democracy.

    b. What is the internal process by which your organization selects potential honorees? Staff and Board members identify potential honorees, who are then discussed and chosen by the New York Board.

    c. For what specific public service or achievement do you wish to honor the U.S. Attorney?

We seek to honor the U.S. Attorney because of his dedication to exposing the breadth and magnitude of the corruption in Albany and punishing those who have abused their office for their own personal gain. He has helped to heighten the demand for reform from

[1] For events that involve any fundraising leading up to or during the event: The United States Attorney may not participate in any active fundraising activity with respect to the event. Nor may the U.S. Attorney allow his name, position, or title to be used for any fundraising activity for your organization. If applicable, you may list his name as an awardee and/or speaker on the program and on invitations issued not more than 30 days prior to the event, along with other information about the program. He may not be listed on any "save the date" notices. Failure to comply with these limitations may preclude the U.S. Attorney from appearing at the event. If the U.S. Attorney is giving an official speech, he may be seated and have photos taken as appropriate for a speaker at the event, but you may not use his photo in connection with any other fundraising efforts.

the media, good government organizations, civic leaders, reform-minded legislators in Albany, and to awaken an apathetic public.

d. Did any of the accomplishments of the U.S. Attorney which you wish to honor directly affect the organization or its members? (Describe.)

Other than vindicating our public position that the activities of legislators in Albany is not appropriate, moral or legal, no.

e. Do any of the board members or host committee or senior staff have any matters pending before or involving the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York?

None that we are aware of or that have been identified to us upon inquiry.

f. Please provide a description and the value of any award item (if the award item is a plaque, certificate or trophy of little intrinsic value, you may so indicate).

The award is a plaque of little intrinsic value.

g. Who else is expected to be honored at the event?

Mort Zuckerman, publisher of the NY Daily News will receive the John Gardner Lifetime Achievement Award. We will add one other honoree. We have invited David Simon, writer and producer, for his mini-series "Show Me A Hero" aired on HBO.

14. If the U.S. Attorney is making a presentation, who else is expected to be making a presentation/be on a panel?

Each award will have a presenter, who normally says complimentary things about the honoree. The other honorees will give acceptance speeches. Generally, the Common Cause/NY Board Chair, Susan Rubinstein, and Executive Director, Susan Lerner, make remarks about the organization's activities and accomplishments.

a. Will the U.S. Attorney be presented with a token or memento in appreciation for his presentation?
   i. ___ Nothing
   ii. _XX__ Plaque or other memento of little intrinsic value
   iii. ___ Other. Please describe, including its value.

15. Describe any special seating arrangements for U.S. Attorney, *e.g.*, dais, general seating (depending on the nature of the event, the U.S. Attorney may or may not be able to accept "dais" seating.)

General table seating for dinner.

16. Promotion of the event: please provide a copy of or link to the invitation/promotional material for the event (or if not available, for the prior year's event).

Material regarding last year's dinner: http://www.commoncause.org/states/new-york/events/45-years-of-empowering-citizens/
A copy of last year's electronic invite accompanies this questionnaire.